



Climate change & health: The case for sustainable development

Author(s): Wilkinson P
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Abstract:

The Earth's climate has been stable for around 10,000 years, though it has been very variable in earlier periods and has occasionally changed abruptly through natural processes. Industrialization and population growth have brought an exponential rise in the use of carbonaceous fuels, which is now having an observable impact on the composition of the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide levels are already substantially above pre-industrial levels, and rising appreciably year on year. Climate models suggest that the anthropogenic rise in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases will lead to rapid climate change over the twenty-first century, with an increase in global average temperatures in the region of two to five degrees Celsius. This will present problems of adaptation for many natural systems and have largely negative effects on human health through both direct and indirect mechanisms. There is also a possibility of unpredicted catastrophic impacts arising from non-linear effects of climate change, which may have more damaging effects on human and other populations. Policy responses have to be directed towards both adaptation needs and mitigation. Mitigation in particular presents formidable social, political and technological challenges, but it may bring net health benefits in the short as well as the longer term.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13623690801957331>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Ecosystem Changes, Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security, Precipitation, Sea Level Rise, Temperature

Extreme Weather Event: Drought, Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones

Food/Water Security: Agricultural Productivity, Food Access/Distribution, Nutritional Quality

Temperature: Extreme Heat, Fluctuations

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Morbidity/Mortality

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Vectorborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Other Diarrheal Disease

Vectorborne Disease: General Vectorborne, Mosquito-borne Disease

Mosquito-borne Disease: Dengue, Malaria

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation, Mitigation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Low Socioeconomic Status

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified